



## EXPLORING MARMA THERAPY: A REVIEW OF ITS HEALING POTENTIAL AND APPLICATIONS

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### ABSTRACT

Marma science is part of vedic science. The development of this science took place from saraswati culture (indus valley civilization) to the time period of sushruta, charaka, ashtang hridaya and later on budhha religion was responsible for its spread in neighboring countries like china, japan. Marma come from the Sanskrit Mruand which means "To kill" the 107 Marma points are categorised in terms of their effect on the vitality of the body. Ayurveda describe use of Marma therapy for various diseases and identification of Marmapoints which is to be cured, since injury to these Marma points may causes serious harmful effect. Different types of muscles, veins, bones, ligaments and joints meets with each other at the Marma point thus these points acts as a physiological junction.

**KEYWORDS:** Marma, Marma Chikitsa, Marma point, Prana.

### INTRODUCTION

The knowledge of marma or vital points has been explained in chapter of sharira sthana of all the three Samhita i.e. sushruta Samhita, charaka Samhita, ashtang hridaya. Marma is an anatomical location that connects muscles, veins, ligaments, bones, and joints There are 107 Marmas(vital spots) in total, with eleven in each limb, twenty-six in the trunk seven in the head and neck area. They are also the places where not just Tridosha but also their subtle forms Prana, Ojus, and Tejas as well as Sattva, Raja and Tama may be found. Marma according to Vagbhata is the meeting point of Mamsa, Asthi, Sira, Snayu, Damni, and Sandhi, as well as the location of Prana. However, it is also believed that Marma can be made up of any or all of the aforementioned. Though Marma is mentioned and described in the Charaka Samhita, no specifics are provided. Marma according to Sushruta, is the site of convergence of all the Dhatus save Dhamani. He utilized the term Marma to describe both disorders of the vital organ system and topographical cure points, implying that topographical cure points should be stimulated to rescue the Marma in the system. Marma spots, according to Siddhar, are the locations in the body where the subtle Marma energy may be detected. Marma is the location on the body where an energy obstruction is perceived. It is the nexus of physiology and awareness, and touching it modifies

the biochemistry of the body, allowing profound and chemical changes to occur in one's makeup. The body is signalled to manufacture exactly what it needs, including hormones and neurochemicals that repair the body, mind, and awareness when these inner pharmacy pathways are stimulated.

Marma points are unique places on the body that are linked to various internal organs, Dosha and Srotas via Pranic channels. To activate internal organs, these spots are employed during Abhyanga coupled with the administration of various types of medicinal and fragrant oils. Marma is a subtle energy that, according to Siddhar, aids in the healthy functioning of the body and life force. Marmas are imperceptible, yet they may be tracked to a place where the energy of the body, mind, and spirit are together. These points can be found on Nadis, nerves, blood vessels, bone, muscle and tissue junctions, and are found throughout the body. Even though Marma books indicate 8000 Marma points in the body, the common consensus is that 108 Marma points serve as the foundation for the art of Marma They are divided into 12 Padumarma(points that are directly or indirectly connected to the nerves of the brain and help in the relief of brain-related diseases) and 96 Thodu Marma. Ayurvedais a living science that believes in treating the mind, body, and spirit to achieve total health. Marma

Chikitsa is the art of manipulating or stimulating Marmapoints for the treatment of ailments, and it is the human body's natural ability to cure itself through these points. The Prana(vital energy) present in Marma may be directed to eliminate blockages (even in distant locations) and boost energy flow, resulting in a state of healthy body, mind, and spirit, by many ways and procedures. Properly applied pressure on suitable Marma can restore normal Prana functioning (in sick body parts), but inappropriate manipulation can result in extreme discomfort, incapacity, deformity, and even death.

### METHODOLOGY

The material has been collected from different articles, literature, and different websites like (NCBI, PubMed, AYU, etc).

### History of Marma

Marma is a branch of Vedic science. Naturally, it has affected all other sciences mentioned in the Veda (400BC), such as Ayurved, Yog, Martial Arts, and the Sidha medical system. The first mention of Marma or Drapi, which is some form of body Armor or corselet to guard the body against the onslaught of enemy weapons, can be found in the Rig Veda. The phrase Kavacha, corselet, or breastplate for protection is also mentioned in the Atharva-Veda. Many allusions to Marma or Varmamay be found throughout the Mahabharata, the ancient epic. Because monks were able to defend themselves against weapons thanks to their mastery of Marma, martial arts became effective and popular for self-defence.

Types of Marma and their significance in Ayurveda  
Several ancient Ayurved Acharya have described Marma, including Charaka and Vagbhat, among others. In the SushrutSamhita, Sushruta the 'father of surgery,' gives the finest description. In this centuries-old treatise, he covers many topics of anatomy and surgery. Marmapoints, according to Sushruta are the seats of life. The three Doshas (Vata Pitta, and Kapha), as well as their subtle versions, are present in Marma (Prana or vital force, Tejas or inner radiance, and Ojas or essence of life). There are also the three Gunas of Satva (beingness), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (darkness). Marma is defined by Acharya Sushruta as the key area of the body that produces numerous deadly signs and symptoms in the event of catastrophic damage. The location or flow of Prana (vital energy). Despite its prominence, Ayurvedic literature makes no clear reference to therapeutic application. Various forms of Marmas are discussed in Ayurveda based on traumatic consequences and prognosis.

### Composition of Marma

1. Mamsa - various structures like fascia, serous membranes, sheaths and muscles can be compared with mamsa. Sushruta has stated that Vata dosha divides Peshi and forms muscle.

2. Sira - These are like channels supplying water or energy to the field or body. Sushruta has explained 4 types of sira. Various experts have tried to correlate these structures with some modern anatomical structures. However the explanation is not satisfactory. Still it is certain that these are channels-srotas- which carry vital fluids or energy to the entire body.

- a) Vata vaha - Those carrying Vata are having blackish (aruna) colour. Vagbhata says that there are impulses (prasandana) in these types of channels. (A.S. sh.6/4) (nerves)
- b) Pitta vaha - These are yellowish in colour. (Lymphatic vessels)
- c) Kapha vaha - These are whitish in colour. (Lymphatic vessels)
- d) Rakta vaha - These are reddish in colour. Vagbhata says that they are deep seated and carry red coloured blood. (Artery and veins) According to Gananath Sen, these can be again subdivided into Aruna - nerve - sympathetic.

Nilā - veins.

Rohini - artery.

Keshika - capillaries.

Gauri - Lymphatic vessels and Dhamani - nerves - motor.

From the above discussion it is clear that the exact nomenclature of the different types of sira is very difficult.

3. Snayu - These are the sub tissues which bind the bones and muscles (Su. sh. 5/42). They are of 4 types - Ligaments, tendons, sphinctor muscles and aponeurosis.

4. Asthi - These can be classified into - bones proper, cartilages, teeth and nails.

5. Smdhi - The bony joints are again classified into - movable, partially movable and non-movable. Vata vaha-(nerves)

Pitta vaha-(Lymphatic vessels)

Kapha vaha-(Lymphatic vessels)

Rakta vaha-(Artery & veins)

Sushruta being surgeon has stressed the importance of the knowledge of marma in surgical practice. (Su. sh. 6/44) He has stated that in any surgical procedure the knowledge of marma, and other structures like nerves, muscles, bones and veins and arteries is utmost essential. (Su. sh. 5/6) While performing kshara karma - application of plant alkalies - also knowledge of marma is essential. Kshara can act like surgical instrument hence one should be very much cautious. (Su. sh. 11/25). The area of marma is very much sensitive (mrudu) hence the surgeon should take great precaution while performing procedures like surgery, application of

cautery or alkali on the marma areas or near these vital points. (Su. su. 12/5)

### Types of Marma

According to the site-

Sakthi - Legs- 22

Kshipra, Talahridaya, Kurcha, Kurchashira, Gulpha, Indrabasti, Janu, Ani, Urvi, Lohitaksha and Vitapa- 2 in each extremity.

Udara and Ura - Abdomen and Chest- 12

Guda, Basti, Nabhi. Hridaya one each; Stanamula, Stanarohita, Apalapa and Apastambha 2 each.

Bahu - Arm - 22Kshipra.

Talahridaya, Kurcha, Kurchashira, Manibandha, Indrabasti, Kurpara, Ani, Urvi, Lohitaksha and Kakshadhara- 2 each.

Prushtha - Back -14

Katikataruna, Kukundara, Nitamba, Parshvasandhi, Bruhati, Amsa, and Amsaphalaka- 2 each.

Jatru-urdhva - Above clavicle- 37

Krukatika, Vidhura, Phana, Apanga, Avarta, Utkshepa, Shankha 2 each, 1 Sthapani, 5 Seemantaka, 4 Shrungataka; 8 Sira Matruka, and Nila and Manya (four dhamani).

Legs – 22

Arm and forearm – 22

Abdomen - 03 Chest - 06 Back - 14

Head and neck – 37

### According to size

1. One finger breadth (Anguli Parimana) - In this type there are four marmas- Urvi, Kurcha-sira. Vitapa and Kakshadhara (Total 12).

2. Two finger breadth - In this type there are three marmas- Gulpha, Manibandha and Stanamula (Total 6).

3. Three finger breadth - In this type there are two marmas- Janu and Kurpara (Total 4).

4. Fist size or Four finger breadth - In this type there are ten marmasKurcha, Guda. Basti, Nabhi, Hridaya, Manya, Sira-Matruka, Simanta and Shrungataka (Total 29).

One Half finger breadth - Rest all (Total 56).

### 4. According to Symptoms - When Injured

Causing immediate death (Sadyha Pranahara) 4 Shrungataka, 1 Adhipati, 2 Shankha, 8 Sira-Matruka, 1 Guda, 1 Hridaya, 1 Basti and 1 Nabhi. They are predominantly agni in nature, hence they can cause death in 7 days.

Causing death after some time (Kalantara Pranahara) 2 Talahridaya, 4 Kshipra, 4 Indrabasti, 8 Vaksha Marma marmas in chest- Apalapa. Apastambha, Stanarohita,

Stanamula, 5 Simanta, 2 Katikataruna, 2 Parshva-sandhi, 2 Bruhati. and 2 Nitamba. These are composed of water and fire elements (saumya), hence they can cause death in less than 15 days.

Causing death if the foreign body is removed (Vishalyaghna) 2 Utkshepa and 1 Sthapani. They are predominantly Vata in nature. Causing disability (Vaikalyakara) -4 Lohitaksha, 4 Ani, 2 Janu, 4 Urvi. 4 Kurcha, 2 Vitapa, 2 Kurpara, 2 Kukundara, 2 Kakshadhara, 2 Vidhura, 2 Krukatika, 2 Amsa, 2 Amsaphalaka, 2 Apanga, 2 Nila, 2 Manya, 2 Phana, 2 Avarta. They are predominantly water element in nature. Causing severe Pain (Rujakara) - 2 Manibandha, 4 Kruchra-shira and 2 Gulpha (Total 8)

Sadyha Pranahara - 19 Kalantara Pranahara - 33 Vishalyghna - 03 Vaikalyakara – 44 Rujakara – 08

According to Sushruta, the Sadyha Pranahara are composed of all 5 important factors like veins, ligaments, muscles, bones and joints. Those belonging to Kalantara Pranahara type are composed of only 4 factors. Vishalyghnakara type is composed of 3 factors. As long as the foreign body is not removed, the person survives. But he will die immediately when it is removed. Vaikalyakara are composed of 2 factors and only one factor is present in Rujakara type.

A. Hridaya - Ashtanga Hridaya ,A. Sangraha - Ashtang Sangraha

Symptoms of injury to ^Marina

Marma injury, diseases and Vitiation of Doshas

After injury to marmas, there can be various symptoms like pain or disability or sudden death, according to their type. But besides these some specific diseases are also created as follows- (A.H. sh. 4)

1. Kshipra - Akshepaka - convulsions. (vitiation of Vata and rakta)

2. Talahridaya - severe pain and death. (vitiation of Vata and rakta)

3. Kurcha -severe pain and tremmors. (Vata)

4. Kurcha-shira - pain and oedema in hand and legs. (all doshas)

5. Gulpha -Urustambha, shandhatva - rigidity in legs and impotency. (Vata)

6. Indrabasti - death due to blood loss (Vata, Rakta)

7. Janu - Khanja - difficulty in walking due to weakness in legs. (Vata)

8. Ani - Urustambha - edema, rigidity in legs and difficulty in movements, (tridosha)

9. Urvi - Blood loss, atrophy of the arm and legs. (Vata, Rakta, mamsa).

10. Lohitaksha - Pakshaghata - hemiplegia. (Vata).

11. Vitapa- Shandhatva- impotency. (Vata)

12. Guda - Instant death (Vata).

13. Apalapa -Severe blood loss and death (Rakta, Pitta, kapha).

14. Apastambha - Kasa and Shwasa- cough and asthma. (Vata, Kapha)

15. Katikataruna- Pandu - anaemia. (rakta)
16. Basti, Nabhi and Hridaya- instant death (Prana vayu)
17. Vidhura - Karnabadhira - deafness. (Prana Vata)
18. Apanga - Andhatva - blindness. (Prana Vata)
19. Avarta - Andhatva - blindness. (vata)
20. Utkshepa - If the foreign body is removed -death.
21. Simanta - Unmada - mental instability. (Vata)
22. Shankha, Shringataka, Adhipati - instant death (Prana Vata)
23. Nila, Manya - Loss of speech, deformed speech, blood loss. (Vata, Rakta)
24. Phana - Agandhadnyana - anosmia. (Prana Vata)(A.S. sh.7)
25. Basti - Ashmari - stone in bladder. (tridosha)
26. Nitamba - Adhakayashopa - edema on the legs. (Vata, Kapha)
27. Amsa - Frozen shoulder (Vata).
28. Amsaphalaka - Bahushosha, swapa - atrophy of arms and excess sleep. (Vata)
29. Stanamula - Kasa, Shwasa - cough and asthma. (Vata, Kapha)
30. Stanarohita - Kasa, Shwasa - cough and asthma. (Vata, Kapha) (S. Sh.8)

Difficult to treat symptoms (asadhya laxana) and marma involvement

Fever (Jwara) - In gambhira jwara there are symptoms like loss of function of all sense organs, dyspnoea (shwasa) Hridaya.

Diarrhoea - (Atisara) - dyspnoea, cough (shwasa, kasa) - Guda, Hridaya.

Piles - (arsha) - edema on feet, hands- Vitapa, Hridaya.

Jaundice (Kamala) - Coma, loss of sensations- Hridaya.

Bleeding disorders (Raktapitta) - Dyspnoea, pain in chest - Hridaya, Shira

Pulmonary tuberculosis (Rajyakshma) - Dyspnoea, polyuria - Basti, Hridaya.

Asthma (shwasa) - Hridaya.

Coma (Murchha) - Hridaya.

Sannyasa, Madatyaya, Unmada - Hridaya.

Stone in KUB (ashmari) - Basti, Nabhi, Vitapa.

Ascites (Udara) - Edema on abdomen and on the penis- Apanga, respective diseases and some texts have also mentioned herbal recipes for treating these diseases.

#### 1. Marma kashaya

This decoction containing ten roots, root of castor oil plant, adhatoda vasika, mucuna pruriens, comiphora mukul, rasna and withania somnifera. The person whose marma has been injured should take 15 to 30 ml. of this freshly made decoction 3 times a day for 7 days.

Depending on the type of symptom, one can easily find out which dosha is aggravated, and then accordingly one can treat the symptoms or the disease proper resulting out of the injury of the marma.

Marina - Tridosha, sub dosha and channels.

#### Tridoshas and Three Main Marma Points

We have already seen that the three main marmas - shira, hridaya and basti are important sites in the body. Although all organs and structures are related with all doshas, it can be said that basti is related with Vata, hridaya is mainly related with Pitta and Shira is related with Kapha.

#### Marma and Sub Doshas

##### A. Vata types and marma

1. Adhipati and sthapani marma are related with Prana and sahasrara chakra. It controls mind and CNS.
2. Nila and manya marma is related with Udana
3. Hridaya marma is related with Vyana
4. Nabhi marma is related with Samana
5. Basti marma is related with Apana

##### B. Pitta types and marma

1. Adhipati and Hridaya marma is related with Sadhaka and is responsible for digestion of knowledge
2. Nila, Manya and Katikataruna marma are related with Bhrajaka
3. Nabhi marma is related with Pachaka
4. and ranjaka Pitta as well as Liver.
5. Kurcha marma is related with Alochaka

##### C. Kapha types and marma

1. Adhipati marma is related with Tarpaka Kapha
2. Phana and Vidhura marma are related with Bodhaka
3. Hridaya and Talahridaya Marma are related with Avalambaka
4. Nabhi marma is related with Kledaka
5. Janu marma is related with Shleshaka Kapha.

##### D. Channels and Marinas

1. Pranavaha srotas- Respiratory channel- Lungs and bronchi Talahridaya, Kshipra, Hridaya
2. Annavaha srotas- Digestive channel- Nabhi, Indrabasti,
3. Udakavaha srotas- Water metabolism channel- Apastambha, Urvi
4. Rasavaha srotas - Plasma and lymph channel- Hridaya, Kshipra, Stanamula, Lohitaksha, Amsaphalaka
5. Raktavaha srotas- channel for blood - Nabhi, kurpara, Bruhati, Janu
6. Mamsavaha srotas- channel for muscle tissue - Kurchashira, Kakshadhara, Ani and Stanarohit.
7. Medovaha srotas- channel for fatty tissue - Guda, Katikataruna,
8. Asthivaha srotas - channel for bones- Kukundara, Manibandha,
9. Majjavaha srotas - channel for nerve tissue- Adhipati, Sthapani, Apalapa, Apastambha, Shringataka
10. Shukravaha srotas - channel for reproductive tissue- Guda, Vitapa, Gulpha
11. Mutravaha srotas - channel for Urinary system- Guda

12. Purishavaha srotas - channel for excretory system-Guda
13. Sweadvaha srotas- channel for sweat- Nila, Manya and Katikataruna

### Role of Marma Therapy in Chikitsa

Clears clogs in energy pathways (Srotas) calms the Doshas and restores the body's natural balance (especially vyanvayu which controls the autonomic nervous system).

- Develops physical, mental, and emotional adaptability.
- Establishes a positive relationship with the unconscious mind, allowing for tremendous and dynamic development on a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual level.

### DISCUSSION

The science of Marma is one of Ayurveda's unique notions that has been thoroughly developed via careful study, particularly during surgical treatments. These are unique and crucial superficial spots that may be found throughout the body. They are unique because they are the 'Prana' locations (Life processes). Further more, Vishama Spandanais one of these Marma points' most remarkable properties. In their Marma Adhyaya, Acharya Charakain his Trimarmiya Siddhi Adhyaya, and Chikitsa Adhyaya, Ashtanga Hridayam in his MarmaVibhaga, Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Charaka, and Chikitsa Adhyaya, Ashtanga Hridayam in their Trimarmiya Siddhi Adhyaya from a traumatological standpoint, the Marmas are crucial. Any trauma at this point has been demonstrated to be more dangerous or to cause a delay in healing from injuries. In Marmabhighta Lakshanas, Acharya Sushrutamentions this. Marma's Lakshanas following trauma or damage is also affected by its structural kind.

### CONCLUSION

Marmas are key locations and Prana centres. They can be used to diagnose and cure illness, or they can be utilized to promote overall health and lifespan. When the human body is subjected to trauma, it exhibits a variety of signs and symptoms, which vary depending on the intensity and kind of damage. When 107 deep or superficial locations on the human surface are injured, they create varied indications and symptoms according to the sort of injury as well as its contents, according to Acharya Sushruta. Our bodies are made up of veins, muscles, bones, joints, nerves, ligaments and other structures that are distributed throughout the body in varying degrees of proportion. Marma, according to Acharya Sushruta, is the location where all of the aforementioned structures unite and are the source of Prana(vitality). Marma's primary components are "Agni Soma Vayu." Anatomical knowledge was stressed in Ayurvedaas part of diagnosis and treatment. Surgical operations need careful evaluation of anatomical perspectives; any misunderstanding of the anatomical framework may result in medical treatment failure. All Ayurvedic

remedies, from basic self-treatments to complicated clinical procedures, rely on Marmas. They are one of the most important aspects of Ayurvedicphilosophy and practice. This article discussed the Marma points that must be covered during Marm aghathato avoid deadly situations.

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